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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
A Tradition of Service

DATE: February 18, 2014
FILE NO:

OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

FROM: BOBBY D. DENHAM, COMMANDER
NORTH PATROL DIVISION

TO: ALICIA E. AULT, CAPTAIN
INTERNAL AFFAIRS BUREAU

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE FORCE REVIEW COMMITTEE FINDINGS:

Case Number:	FO2331587
Incident:	Significant Force
Incident Date:	March 21, 2013
Unit:	Lakewood Station
Suspect:	Thomas Quintero Felix, MH/04-03-80
Involved Employee:	Deputy Benjamin Alvarado, #[redacted] Deputy [redacted] #[redacted] Deputy [redacted], #[redacted] Deputy [redacted] #[redacted]
EFRC Date:	February 13, 2014

The Executive Force Review Committee (EFRC) consisting of Commanders Bobby Denham, Stephen Johnson, and Ralph Webb met and reviewed the above case.

FORCE POLICY RELATING TO INCIDENT:

Law enforcement officers are entitled to use the amount of force that is reasonable and necessary to make an arrest, prevent an escape, or overcome resistance.

FINDINGS:

A Lakewood Station deputy received information from the station desk regarding a stolen vehicle that was traveling in the area as found on the "Advanced Surveillance and Protection" (A.S.A.P.) system. He located the stolen vehicle and initiated a "Code-9" surveillance of the suspect.

The deputy noticed the sole occupant (suspect) drove the car dangerously by failing to stop at a posted stop sign. The suspect then increased his speed in what appeared to the deputy as an attempt at evading. The deputy broadcasted he was in pursuit and chased after the suspect between 40 to 45 mph for approximately one half mile. The suspect failed to negotiate the T-intersection as he drove west on Fairman Street and came to a stop on the front lawn of the home at [redacted] Levelside Drive.

The suspect ignored commands to stay in the car and exited, and then he laid face down on the front lawn. The suspect then jumped up and slowly walked toward the deputy stating, "Fuck you! I didn't do anything wrong," and "Fuck this! Let's do it; it's my car. I didn't steal it." The deputy felt threatened so he took the suspect to the ground by placing him in a bear hug and used his body weight to pull the suspect down. The deputy did so in order to place the suspect in custody since he would not obey commands to get on the ground.

The suspect fought by thrashing his body about, throwing his elbows backward toward the deputy, and other responding deputies, and he kicked at them while trying to get to his feet. The deputy punched the suspect on the face four to five times, which had no effect, and one of the assisting deputies sprayed the suspect with OC spray, which also had no effect.

The suspect continued to struggle and kick at the deputies. The assisting deputy, in order to get the suspect to stop fighting, struck the suspect two times on the left side rib cage with his right knee. The suspect continued to kick his feet and flail his body about during the struggle while resisting efforts to handcuff him. The assisting deputy utilized a downward elbow strike to the suspect's shoulder in an attempt to gain his compliance in handcuffing.

While assisting deputies helped place the suspect in handcuffs, one of the deputies applied the Hobble Restraint to the suspect's ankles. The suspect still kicked his legs about and tried to get up so another assisting deputy utilized the Total Appendage Restraint Procedure (TARP) and immediately placed the suspect on his left side to monitor his breathing. The TARP was removed from the suspect after approximately eight minutes, which was after he stopped struggling against the restraint.

A Lakewood Station field supervisor responded and filmed the scene and his interviews of the suspect and three witnesses. The suspect was transported via ambulance to the hospital for treatment of OC contamination and because of his complaint of pain to his left rib cage area. It was discovered the suspect had a broken left rib.

The EFRC determined the force used against the suspect was within Department policy. The EFRC also determined the tactics used were within Department policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The EFRC recommended the unit commander, Captain Merrill E. Ladenheim, conduct a tactical debriefing with the involved personnel regarding the unique circumstances of this incident. The tactical debriefing is to include the importance of indicating in the deputies reports the reasons why certain force options were utilized against the suspect, and the need for the on-scene sergeant to take photographs of the scene.

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